GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2768
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2001
WOMAN RESERVATION BILL
RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress been made to bring about a consensus on the Women Reservation Bill for reservation of seats for women in the State and Central Legislatures;

(b) the time by which the bill is likely to be brought up for consideration of the Houses of Parliament; and (

(c) the reasons for the inordinate delay indicating the major differences that have emerged as a result of consultations for a consensus?

Answer

MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE & COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY)

(a) to (c): In consonance with its commitment to empower the women and as agreed to in principle by most of the political parties in the meeting of leaders of parties/Groups in Parliament on 22.12.1999 chaired by the Prime Minister, the Government introduced on 23.12.1999 the Constitution (Eighty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 1999, seeking to provide that as nearly as one-third of the seats shall be reserved for women in the House of the People and Legislative Assemblies of States. The Bill was listed for consideration and passing in that House on 21.12.2000 and 22.12.2000 during Winter Session but could not be considered in the absence of consensus among the political parties. The Bill did not come up for consideration and passing in the Budget and Monsoon Sessions of Parliament this year. The notice of consideration and passing of the Bill in the Lok Sabha has also been given for the current Winter Session, 2001.

The issue of women`s reservation was also informally raised in the all-parties meeting on electoral reforms convened by the government on 13.9.2001 but no concrete discussion could take place. Thus, it may be seen that the Government has all along made sincere efforts to debate and discuss the Bill in the Houses of Parliament and to evolve consensus among all the Political Parties. Now, it is for Parliament to take decision on the pending Bill.